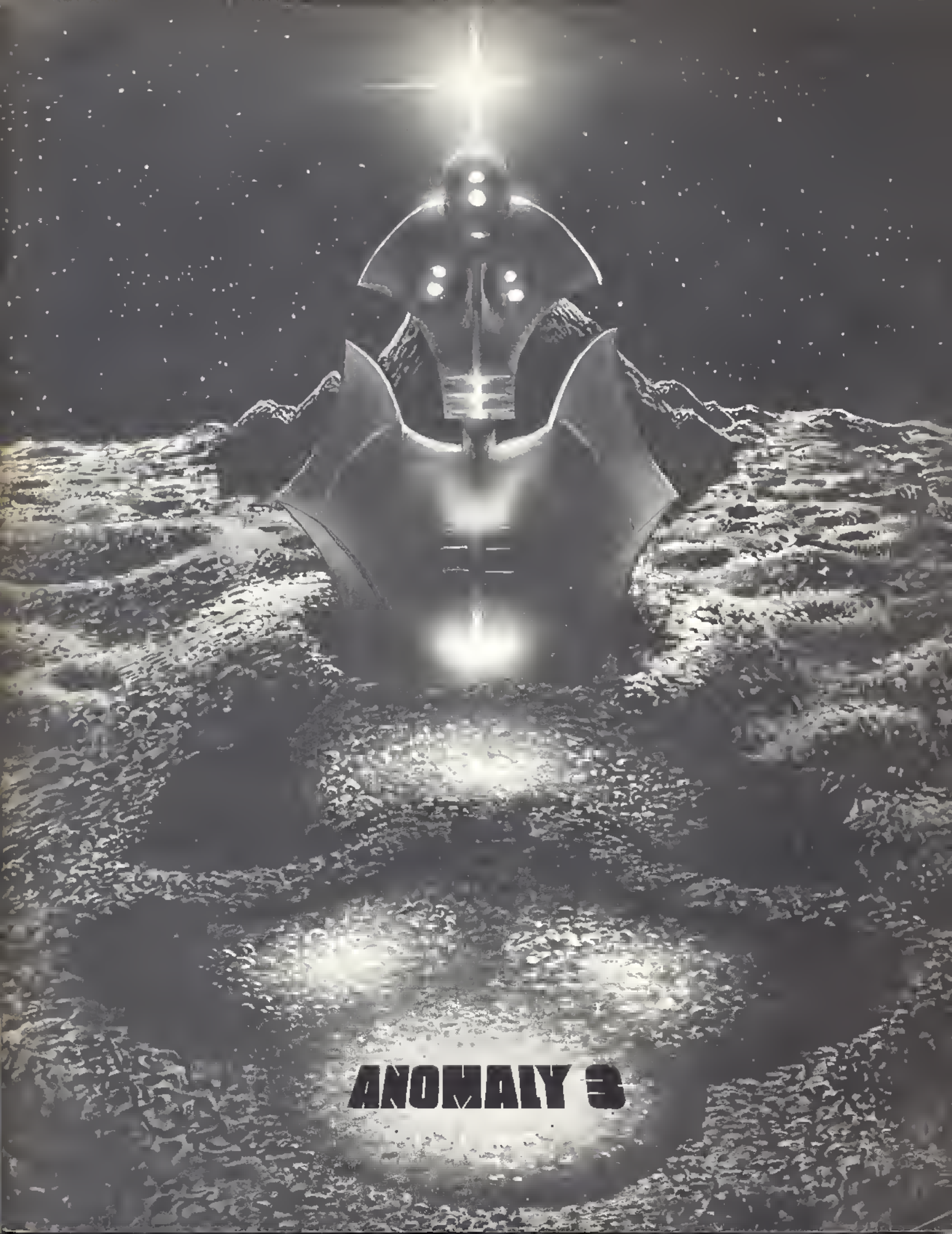




ANOMALY 3

ANOMALY 3

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KENNETH SMITH
30 JANUARY 1969

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**THE
CASTLE
OF THE
KING**
an allegory.

Written by:
Jan S. Strnad

Illustrated by:
Herb Arnold





In the vines encompassing a tomb, the conjurer's voice stole around me. But he could not answer the questions I asked, saying only that I must seek the castle of the king; perhaps there I would find my solution.

"I will summon a guide," he said, "for the way is through lands foreign to all but a few. The one I invoke will see you there in safety."



We passed through forests of night, past whispering shadows and glowing eyes and inferences of forms best hidden by the dark.

"The King will not appreciate our presence," said my guide. "Why do you not solve your own problem and spare him the interruption?"

I replied: "Because I cannot."



At last the forests opened onto mountains of treacherous rock and crags, and above them all, like a crown of harsh stone, stood the castle. My guide spoke: "No guards will block our path; the King grants audience to all who come thus far."

And indeed we were soon inside the castle walls, having met no living creature along the way, and stood at the entrance of the great throne room itself.



My guide opened the door and a deep scent of musk issued forth.
We stepped cautiously within,
and we beheld the king—



This ancient bones, adorned in dust and tatters of velour, slumped loosely on the throne. Vermin surveyed their realm from empty sockets, and the King sat in hushed abeyance to their rule.



turned to face my guide. His hood lay back to reveal an aspect identical to my own.

"The King is beyond all caring for your mortal ills," he said. "If a solution exists, then it is we who must discover it."

I nodded slowly, and together we abandoned the castle of the King.

finis

PROFILE:
ROBERT
KLINE

introduction

Robert Kline entered fandom officially in August of 1969 with the publication of *ANOMALY* 1. The zine carried fourteen interior pages of Kline artwork and sported a panoramic cover from one of Bob's Edgar Rice Burroughs paintings, but Bob's effect on the magazine went far beyond these contributions. He imbued the editors with a new spirit that would not tolerate the masses of mediocre material they had accumulated for the first issue, caused them to begin anew, and forced them — by the quality of his own contributions — into producing a quality magazine. It demolished the budget to do so, but we've been grateful ever since.

ANOMALY was one of the many magazines to feel Bob's influence. He contributed heavily to comic fandom with artistic donations to more fan magazines than I care to list, but which included *STAR-STUDD*, *THIS IS LEGEND*, *THE GOLDEN AGE*, *FANTASTIC FANZINE*, *SOUA TRONT*, and the ever-present *RBCC*, plus contributions to many smaller fan publications. He became a Big Name Fan and his name was often advertised above those of older, time-honored fan artists. He was sought by anxious fan editors, his art was displayed at conventions, and he served with established fan artists Dave Cockrum, Berni Wrightson, Michael Kaluta, and Steve Hickman on the MetroCon '70 "Sword and Sorcery" panel. In spite of this renown (or possibly because of it) Bob Kline announced in the fall of 1970 that he was quitting active fandom.

When his hitch in the Air Force expired in January of 1971, he immediately resumed residence in the Los Angeles area, signed up for courses at the Art Center College of Design, and proceeded to develop his artistic talents even further. I visited him briefly in late May of 1971 to see how things were going; this article is the result of that visit and will hopefully provide some interesting insights into the non-fandom Kline. (The fannish Bob Kline has been reported on by several fan magazines; by far the best of these is *FANTASTIC FANZINE* 12, obtainable from Gary Groth at 7263 Evanston Road, Springfield, Virginia 22150 for \$1.25 a copy. The article/interview includes much art by Bob, including a full color painting, and may be combined with the following article to provide a reasonably complete profile of Bob Kline, artist and person.) The following artwork ranges from early Kline to very recent work; and for the benefit of swipe hunters, I'd like to mention that the Tarnsman full-page illustration was sent to me some weeks before any appearance of Gino d'Achille's cover for *ASSASSIN OF GOR*.

THE TERRIBLE KLINEOSAURUS



Bob Kline's first published work, from the November 1962 issue of *FAMOUS MONSTERS*. (C) 1962 Warren Publishing Co., New York, N.Y.

Mark Cole and I arrived in Los Angeles on Bob's last day of classes at the Art Center. His apartment, which he graciously shares with wife Missie and two year old son Tom, is decorated with paintings by himself: a Genghis Kahn type warrior, a desert scene, a street scene, and the paintings used as covers for MCR 4 and FANTASTIC FANZINE 12. On the lamp table and on the bookshelf are molded sculptures done as school assignments — one is in the shape of a claw, the other is pure design. We moved to his bedroom studio to view more of the work he had done that semester; he pulled three illustrations from his portfolio.

"The assignment was to take a common object and do something unusual with it. I chose a can opener and did these three drawings." He uncovered them one by one.

The can opener was one of those you punch into the top of the can and arduously grind around the edge until a crinkled can top finally comes loose. They usually come with corkscrews in the handle, though this one was a plain model. The first illustration had equipped it with an electric cord, the second placed it on the nose of a rhinoceros, and the third depicted it opening a starfilled universe to reveal a blue sky behind the stars. (I mentally wrestled for some time with the problem of printing this third drawing before finally being forced to discard it — with great reluctance.)

Bob continued producing assignments from his school portfolio; abstract designs, a collage, and variations of an invented Martian alphabet letter.

"One thing about the Art Center," said Bob, "is their philosophy that anything you do once you should be able to do again. So the class chose the three most varied modifications of the letter and I had to redraw them." He then showed us the second versions; they were almost photographic duplicates of the originals.

In a similar assignment Bob had to make a collage of magazine clippings; after doing so he was told to do a painted duplicate. This, too, was almost an exact reproduction of the original.

Finally we came to the first illustration to reflect the Bob Kline familiar to fanzine readers — the road-to-Fodnell fantasy illustration; the original version is printed on a smaller scale beside it. The first version had been completed when he was assigned to do a drawing utilizing Rembrandt-type shading.

"I immediately thought of this drawing and realized how much better it could be. So I did it over — it took quite awhile just getting that little fairy and the worm to look right. You know, if you draw a worm like it would really look with that backlight, it comes out looking like a piece of rope. I had to take some artistic license just to make it look like a worm."

We also leafed through sketchbooks filled with drawings of live models, both human and animal (including one or two dinosaurs, probably not from living models), drawn in both pencil and ink. I asked Bob the value of doing the sketches.

"It's really helped my anatomy," he said. "I'm beginning to draw people as if they were made of flesh and muscle rather than being carved out of stone." He turned to a series of drawings of a rather weighty female model. "This gal was totally repulsive, but it gave me a lot of practice shading and drawing lumps of fat. I'm glad they had her come in."

That evening we viewed a different kind of class assignment: "We were supposed to take a poem or a piece of music or something like that, and do a piece of art to go with it. They said we could even do a film if we wanted to, so I shot this one and then added the music later — actually doing just the opposite of the assignment." The movie is titled "The Girl and the Balloon"; it stars Missie Kline and Bob's brother-in-law Bill (who plays the most insidious villain this side of Ming the Merciless).









"It cost me about \$50 to make that six minutes of film," said Bob. "I used six rolls of film, eight orange balloons, and rented a tank of helium to keep the balloons inflated. We spent two weekends in filming." The music is added by way of tape cassette played along with the film — fortunately the timing does not have to be exact. "If I get it started at just the right instant it really works out well with the beat of the music corresponding beautifully with that of the action — but it doesn't have to be that exact to work well enough. There's no talking or any delicate sound synchronization."

While the projector was out we delved deep into the past to see Bob's animated film about dinosaurs. Made by Bob around the age of fourteen, these few feet of celluloid are near classics. The dinosaurs were constructed from modeling clay and were filmed in Bob's backyard. A few problems occurred during the filming.

"For one thing, I didn't know that most animators take two frames for each piece of stop motion; I just used one per movement so the action is very jerky and fast."

A second problem was caused by the unstable background of leaves and sticks jumping around, grass snapping back and forth, and so on during the show. All in all, it was a toss-up as to which was more exciting, the background or the dinosaurs.

"What are those hands and arms that keep popping in and out along the sides of the screen?" I asked.

"Those are mine," said Bob. "My grandfather was handling the camera while I moved the dinosaurs; sometimes he got a little anxious and didn't give me time to get out of the picture before he'd shoot the frame."

I returned my full attention to the movie.

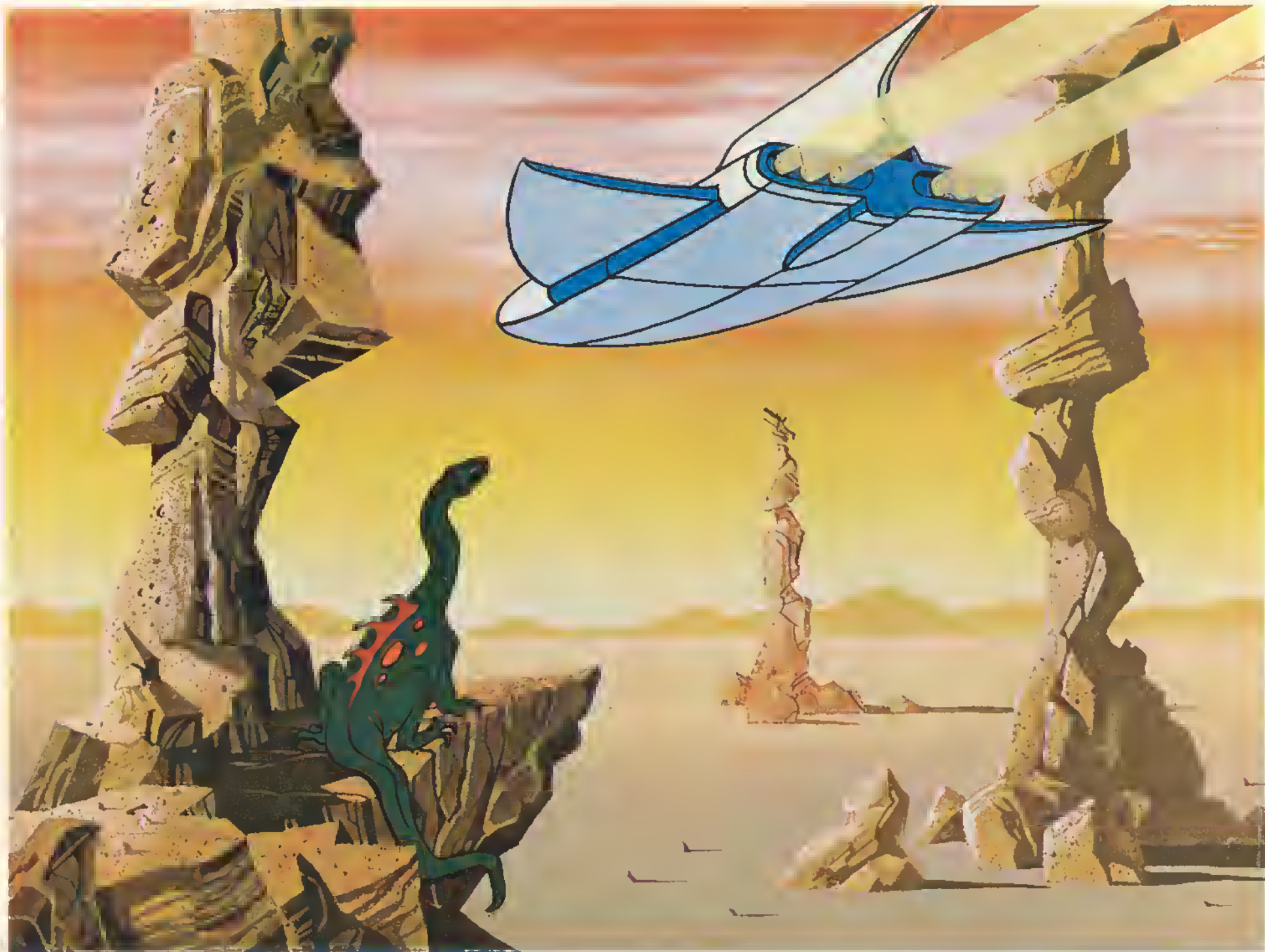
A triceratops walked calmly up to a tyrannosaurus and complacently jabbed him in the stomach, then backed up to let the tyrannosaurus move forward and bite him on the neck. The battle ended with the tyrannosaurus biting off the other dinosaur's leg and eating it. The climax of the film came when the dinosaurs marched up on a platform one by one and, picking up a cotton swab, wrote "Merry Xmas" on the wall.

While I was there I picked up the only completed frame to Bob's cartoon movie.

"The plot was exactly that of 'His Brother's Keeper' (which appeared in *ANOMALY 1*), so I doubt that I'll ever do that same story. I had to cut it short when I joined the Air Force and it's too expensive to do a film like that on my own, but I'd still like to do one if I ever get the chance. Maybe Ray Bradbury's 'A Sound of Thunder' or something from Keith Laumer's Retief series."

Judging from the painting reproduced with this article, animation fans have a treat in store for them if such a project is ever realized.

As astute readers may have suspected, Bob Kline has a thing for dinosaurs. His first comic strip, of about the same time period as the dinosaur film, concerned two antagonists whose plane lands in a hidden valley chock full of the creatures. Inspired by the Turok comics, Bob drew a sequence of panels concerning dinosaur life to enhance the tone of the strip, working quickly into the battle between airplane and giant reptile. The most notable aspect of the strip, outside the snappy dialogue, is the excellent rendering of the dinosaurs



compared to the extremely primitive representation of the strip's human "stars". Given this obvious bias it wouldn't have been in the least surprising had the dinosaurs emerged victorious. In fact, it might have been justified and merciful.

Amid this Mesozoic atmosphere two names were certain to creep into the conversation: Ray Harryhausen and Jim Danforth.

Bob had written to me about this subject earlier. In the letter he expressed a definite preference:

"Harryhausen has always been my favorite because, for all practical purposes, he's had no competition. And though it's hard to cite specific examples, I do think he's come a long way since 'It' came from beneath the sea. It seems his treatment of specific subjects benefits from experience. Compare the dinosaurs, particularly the upright ones, in *THE ANIMAL WORLD* to those seen in *ONE MILLION YEARS B.C.* or *THE VALLEY OF GWANGI*. In *THE ANIMAL WORLD* the dinosaurs' eyes didn't move much, the front legs didn't move (not to mention individual digits), the skin was unconvincingly over-scaly, and those poor beasts seemed to be supplied with toothpicks instead of anything resembling normal teeth. Ray appears to have learned a lot in the years between his epic tales of the prehistoric, and all these ills have been remedied.

"I'm sorry I haven't had the opportunity to see Jim Danforth's *JACK THE GIANT KILLER*; I'd like to be able to compare it with *THE 7TH VOYAGE OF SINBAD*. I did see *THE WONDERFUL WORLD OF THE BROTHERS GRIMM*, and *THE SEVEN FACES OF DOCTOR LAO*. Those dragons were both quite good, but neither had the believability of movement or appearance that a Harryhausen production has."

By the time I was able to visit Bob in person, Danforth's *WHEN DINOSAURS RULED THE EARTH* had been released. Bob's position changed slightly upon seeing the film:

"Danforth was doing things there that Harryhausen wouldn't even attempt. Like that shot of the dinosaur descending the mountainside: it was an extremely difficult shot and the masking wasn't perfect, but Harryhausen wouldn't have even tried to do such a thing. And the opening scene with the plesiosaur in that weird half-flight from the fires — it was just fantastic."

Bob guided us through yet another approach to the subject of dinosaurs on the next day's trip to Disneyland. Once inside, Bob immediately led us to the train and the tour through the age of reptiles. We went through twice before moving on to more of Bob's favorite attractions: *Pirates of the Caribbean* and *The Haunted Mansion* were definitely the highlights of the visit. It was the first time for both Mark and I to visit Disneyland, and we could almost believe it was Bob's from his reactions to the shows.

"The thing about Disneyland is the multitude of things to see, even within individual rides. I know that I'm seeing things in *The Haunted Mansion* that you and Mark missed, just because I've been through it several times. It's the same way with

the dragon scenes in *Sleeping Beauty*; everytime I see it I notice something more that the artists are doing, something I never noticed before."

Also interesting to us was his reaction to Roger Brand's comment in *FUNNYWORLD 12* that Disneyland is "pretty malignant". Bob: "It seems impossible to me that anybody could feel that way — the whole thing is just so tremendous. And it can never be done by anyone else: anything like it will simply be an imitation of the real thing. Regular amusement park people just don't have the knowledge and imagination to create something like Disneyland."

Which brings up another important point about Bob Kline: his reverence for originality.

"I always try to be original in what I do," he says. "That's why I'd appreciate your mentioning the coincidence concerning the Tarnsman drawing. I guess that pose was a natural, bound to occur pretty soon in the paperback book covers; if I'd known someone else was going to do it, I would have done something different."



the eternal aviatrix



When I asked him about the people who thought he was trying to copy Frazetta, he said, "I'm sorry they feel that way. Of course I've been influenced by Frazetta, but I try to stay as far away from his style as possible. For instance, I don't really like the huge breasted women all that much; they border on being grotesque rather than sexy."

Having seen Bob's copying work as assigned by the Art Center, it's obvious that if he wanted to imitate Frazetta, he could do so; that he chooses not to, preferring to develop his own style, is a tribute to his artistic integrity. (One of his assignments was to do a drawing in the style of Daumier; Bob's portrayal of Dracula is the drawing he did and will suffice as an example.)

I asked him what it had been like working for various fan magazines and under different editorial policies.

"You were pretty strict about what you wanted for ANOMALY. Of course you knew that I enjoyed illustrating Robert E. Howard's stories, and I got to choose what ones I did, so it wasn't bad. But near the end of my fan involvement I began receiving open assignments where I could do anything at all that I felt like doing, as long as it was in some way 'fan' oriented."

What did Bob Kline derive from his year in active fandom?

"I'm sure I benefited from it. I've got a much fatter portfolio, for one thing. I would never have done that volume of work in my spare time if there hadn't been a 'market' for it. I will always be cranking out piles of preliminary sketches, but completing finished pieces requires an incentive additional to the ever-present urge-to-draw. In my case, the incentive was seeing my stuff printed and to obtain large audience reaction. Also, I received a letter from Al Williamson telling me he liked my cover for FANTASTIC FANZINE 12, and that sort of thing gives me a good feeling. Doing artwork for an audience is entirely different from doing it just for yourself. I don't understand those artists who paint purely for their own satisfaction."

Then why did he quit? "I was getting stale, and I couldn't get interested anymore. Since before the 1970 New York Convention I'd had that problem: the last four or five projects

I'd completed just didn't excite me the way previous things had. I'm not sure what the problem was, but I was sure I needed an extended rest from deadlines and other pressures."

There's a good possibility that the problem stemmed from Bob's having reached a pinnacle of accomplishment — there was simply nothing more for him to learn about his art without receiving formal training. As the learning process halted, so did his interest.

"Once I started these assignments for the Art Center, though, I soon found myself wishing I was back drawing monsters and things again — it's a lot easier than what the Art Center tells me to do."

When asked to speculate on his future, Bob provides a wide range of possibilities.

"I'd like to work at Disneyland. Actually I already have worked there, but I was a parking lot attendant. I'd like to get into the creative aspect of it: designing rides like The Haunted Mansion, doing preliminary paintings, and work like that. The problem is, those have already been done."

"I'd like to do animated movies, and I'd like to work with the comics if the pay scale ever rose to where I could support a family on it."

As with many fans, Bob's interest in the comics has been considerably dampened by the lack of quality in the comics as they are today. The need to sell to "kiddies" eliminates any possibility of realizing the potential of the medium, but without the younger set's financial support the comics can't survive. Because of this problem, and the low pay for artists, Bob says, "I seriously doubt that I'll be making a living in the near future as a comic book illustrator."

Whatever lies in store for him, Bob is sure to meet it with skill and imagination, and probably with a dinosaur or two. Or as he himself puts it:

"The future shines brightly as Bob Kline faces forward, squinty-eyed, to meet his destiny."

— Fade Out —

— Up Music —

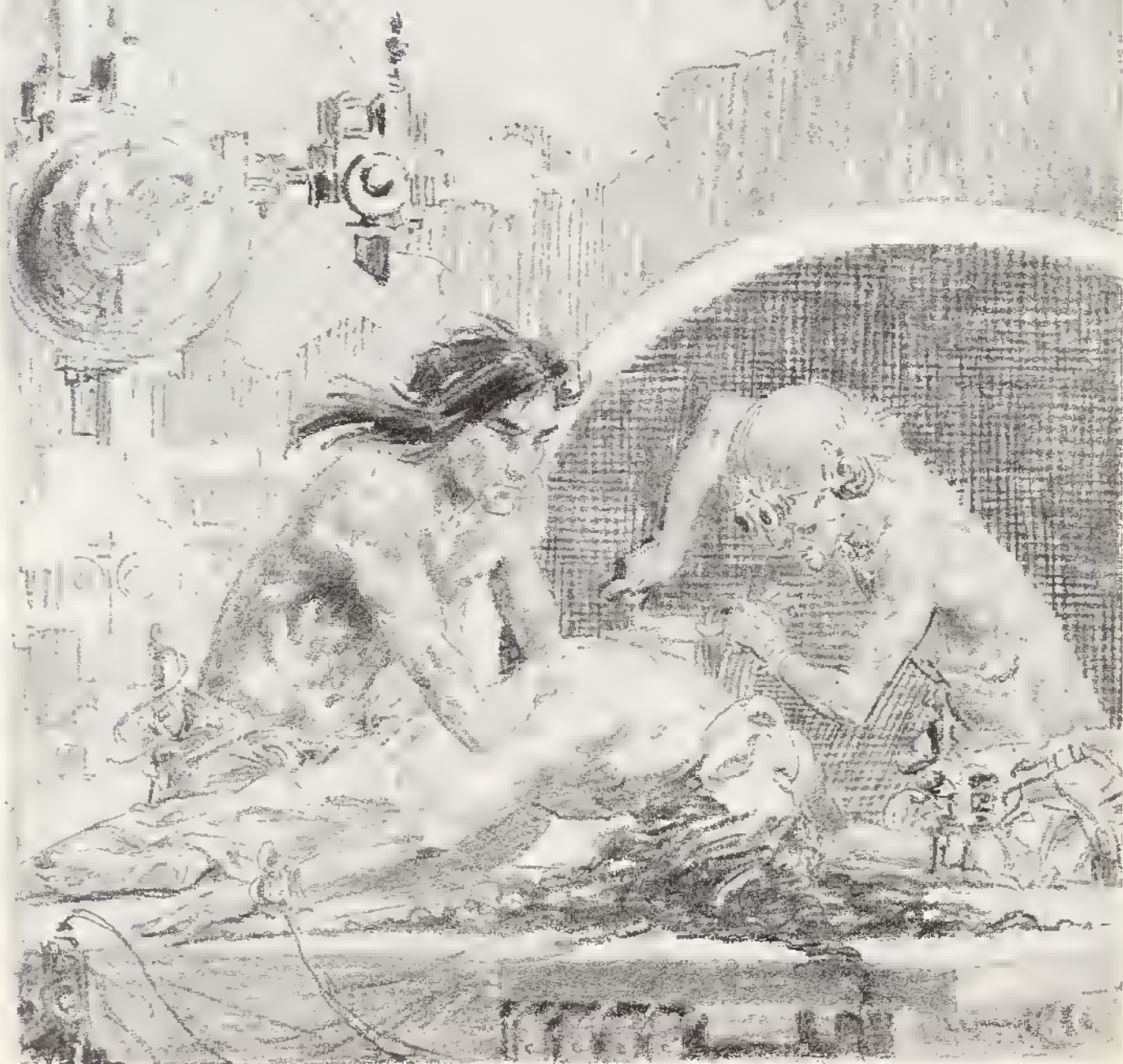
— Roll Credits —



Kline

R.G. Krenkel

A PORTFOLIO





REK

THE PINE TRAVELER

R&K



TOUCHDOWN





RGN

— THE FIRE PLANET —



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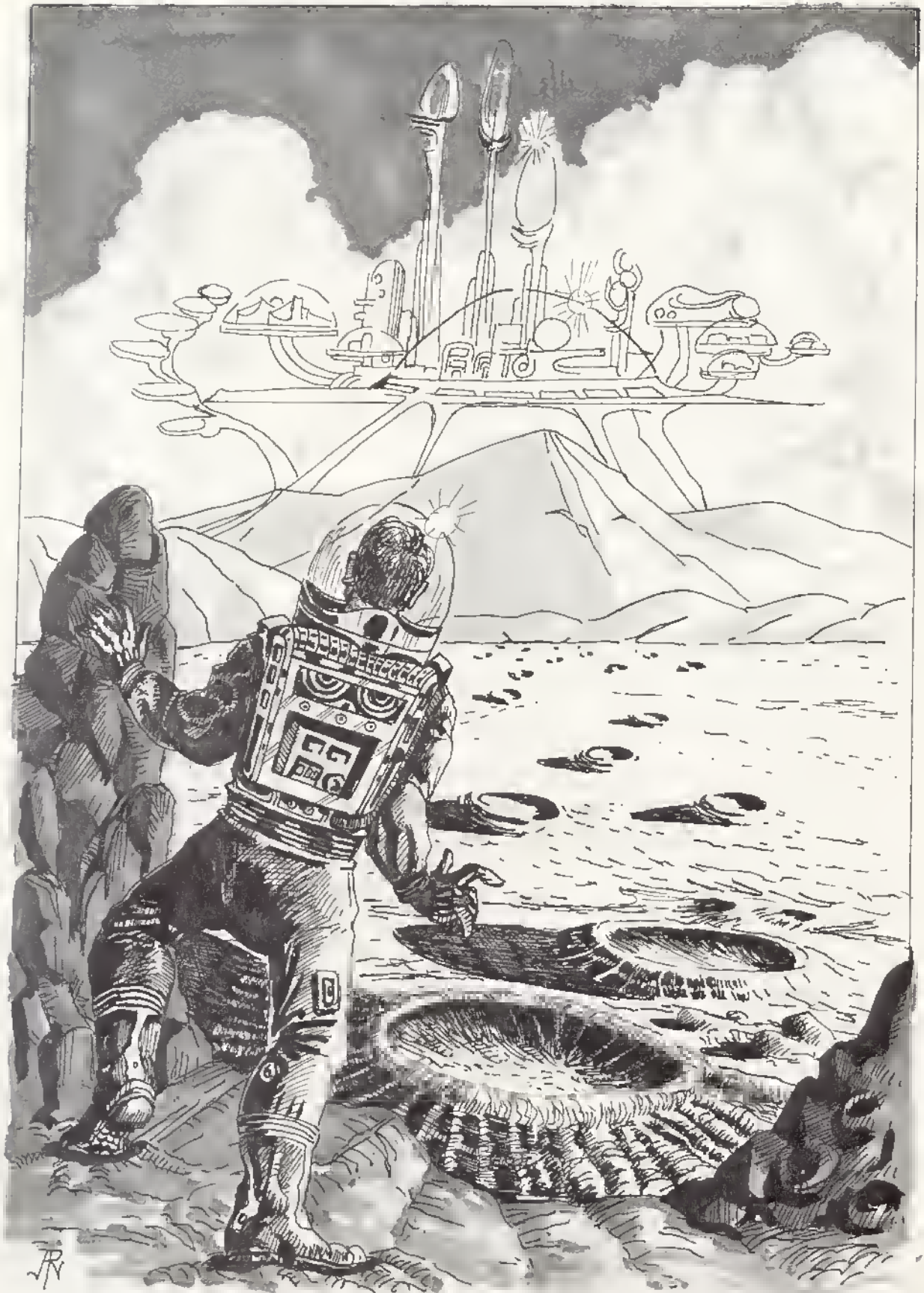
You see, m'
lad, no one
has ever
seen any-
thing like it!

CHEEP!

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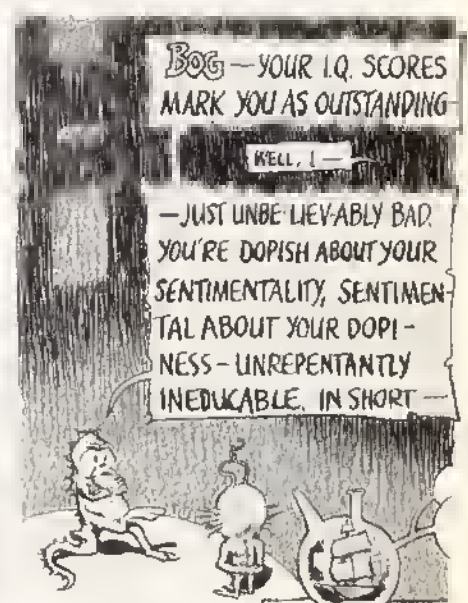
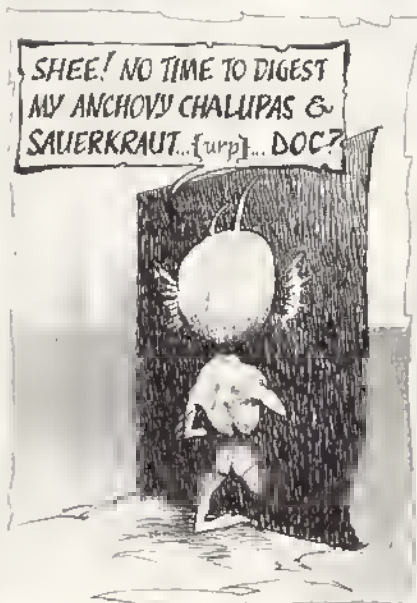




A
PALTRY
INTRODUCTION DESIGNED TO
EXPLAIN THE WORLD-HISTORICAL SIGNIFICANCE
OF THE FOLLOWING STORY AS A MEANS OF FURTHER-
ING INTERPLANETARY UNDERSTANDING, IN THIS CASE, OF THE
INHABITANTS OF A CULTURE SO INCOMPREHENSIBLY SUPERIOR
TO THE LIMITED STANDPOINT OF HUMAN BEINGS THAT ONLY OF
THIS CULTURE HAS IT EVER BEEN SAID THAT IT
DISCOVERED THE ULTIMATE SECRET OF THE WHOLE
SIDEREAL UNIVERSE, ONLY TO FORGET IT AGAIN TWO
HOURS LATER; A CULTURE SO VAST AND IMPERCEPTIBLY
VARIEGATED THAT WE SCARCELY HAVE ROOM LEFT
TO INTRODUCE ITS MOST FORGETTABLE CHARACTER...



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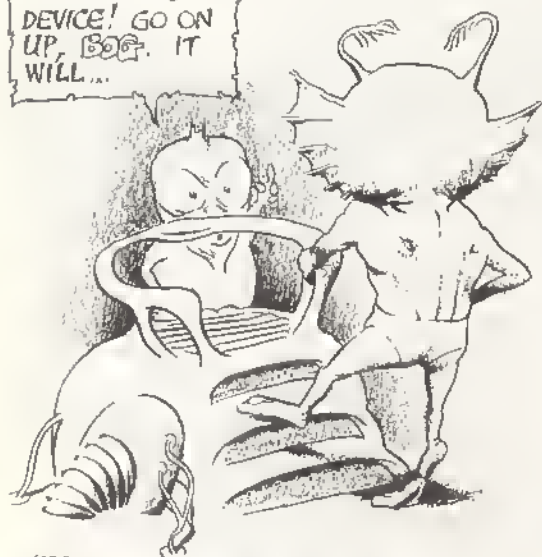


—YOU HAVE THE MENTALITY
OF THAT FABLED CREATURE
OF THE MERCIFULLY DIM PAST,
A REPUBLICAN VICE-PRESIDENT!

NOW BOB, I WANT YOU TO LISTEN CLOSELY. I'VE
ALWAYS HAD A SPECIAL CONCERN FOR YOU, SO I'D
LIKE TO SEE WHAT I CAN DO. AS IT SO HAPPENS —
< THANK YOU, QUORK > I'VE BEEN WORKING ON A...



DEVICE! GO ON
UP, BOB. IT
WILL...



KRS 15 MARCH 1970

ATTACK AT THE SEAT EVERY ONE
OF YOUR PROBLEMS — RECIDIVISTIC
REPUBLICANISM, MISBEGOTTEN
SELF-CONFIDENCE...



...WAS FROM
THE ANTHONY
CHALUPAS?

HERE GOES!



SPADOP?

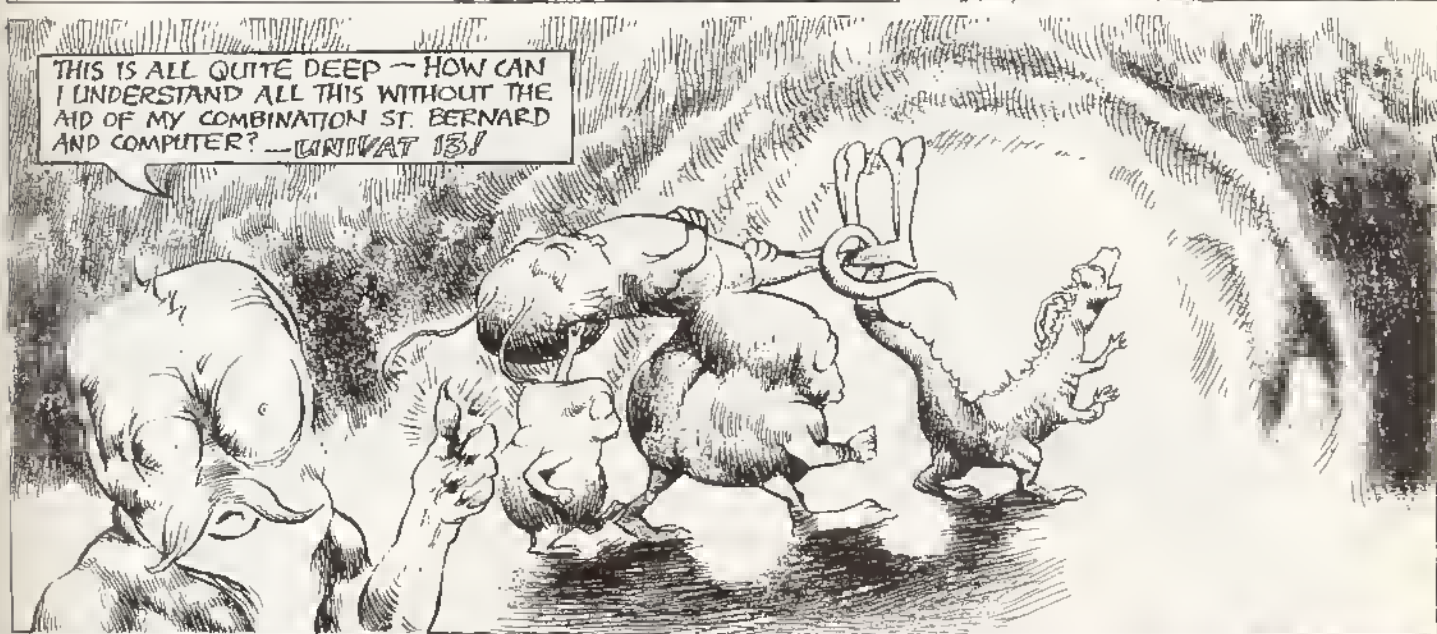


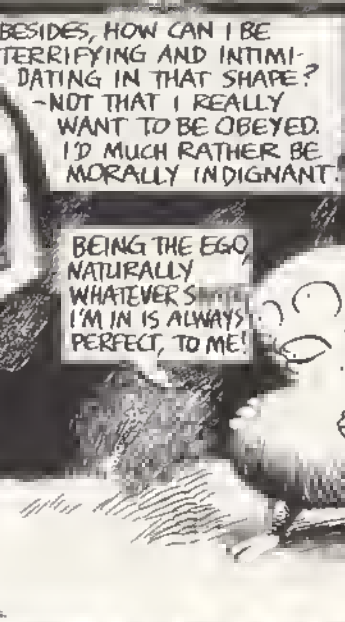
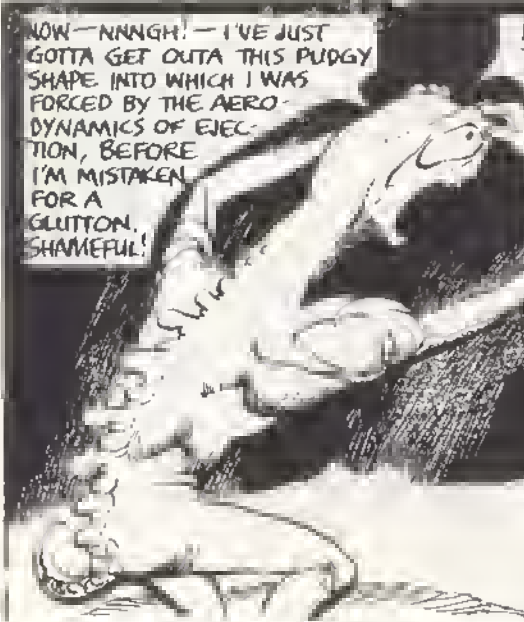
FORP?



FEEDOG?

5 17 JUNE 70







DIG THE SELF-CENTERED
LITTLE FREAK!



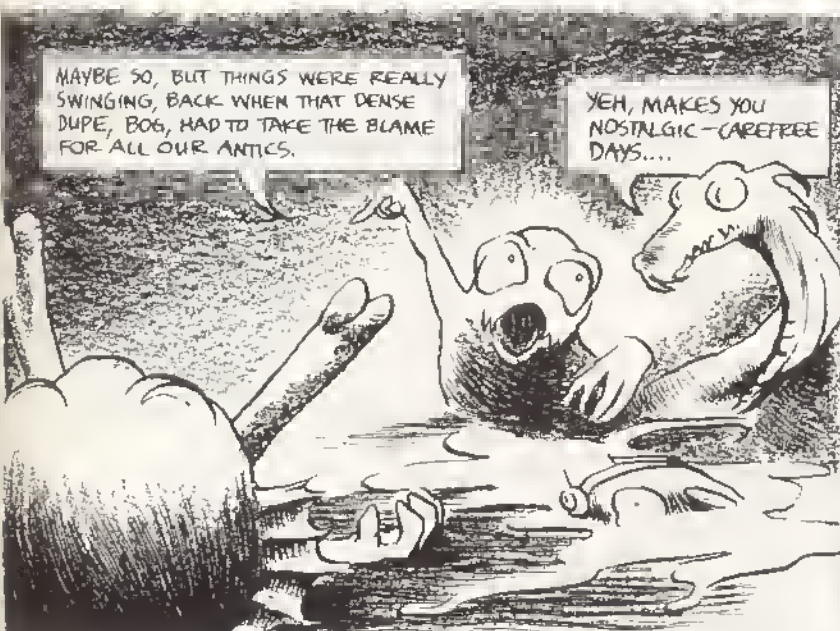
WATCH THIS
BLOW HIS
MIND—



ZAPK! ZAPK!
ZAPK!



—AIN'T IT GREAT, BEIN'
HOME ALL TOGETHER AGAIN?

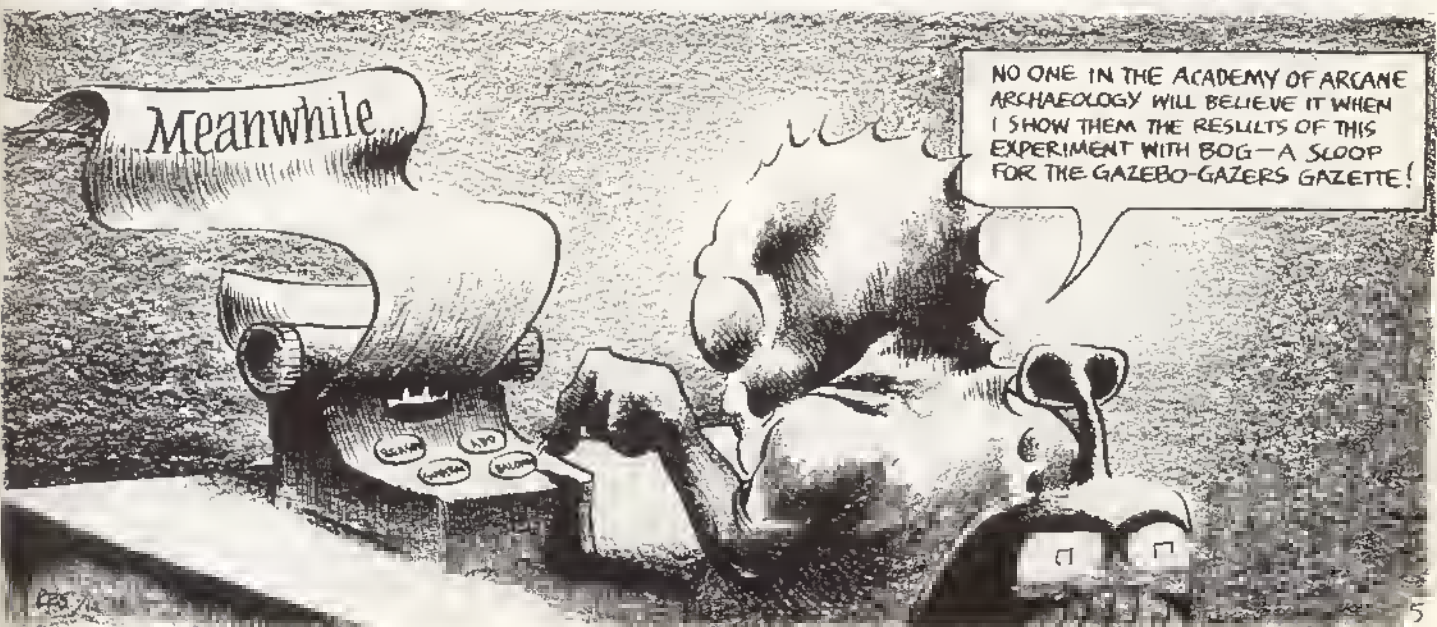


MAYBE SO, BUT THINGS WERE REALLY
SWINGING, BACK WHEN THAT DENSE
DUPE, BOG, HAD TO TAKE THE BLAME
FOR ALL OUR ANTICS.

YEH, MAKES YOU
NOSTALGIC—CAREFREE
DAYS....



THERE OUGHT TO BE SOME
WAY WE COULD RESURRECT
THE LITTLE POOP....



Meanwhile

NO ONE IN THE ACADEMY OF ARCANÉ
ARCHAEOLOGY WILL BELIEVE IT WHEN
I SHOW THEM THE RESULTS OF THIS
EXPERIMENT WITH BOG—A SLOOP
FOR THE GAZEBO-GAZERS GAZETTE!

THE COMPUTATIONAL VORTEX ALL BEING THAT FATEFUL DAY WHEN I SET

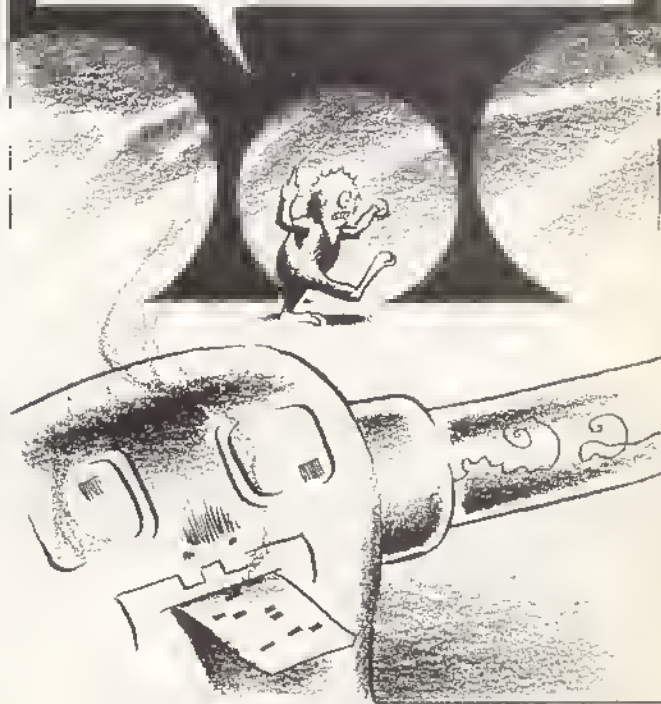
GOTT IM HIMMEL!

PROGRAM
NEURO

$\sum_{n=1}^{\infty} 11 \times [N^2]$

$\frac{1}{3} \dots$

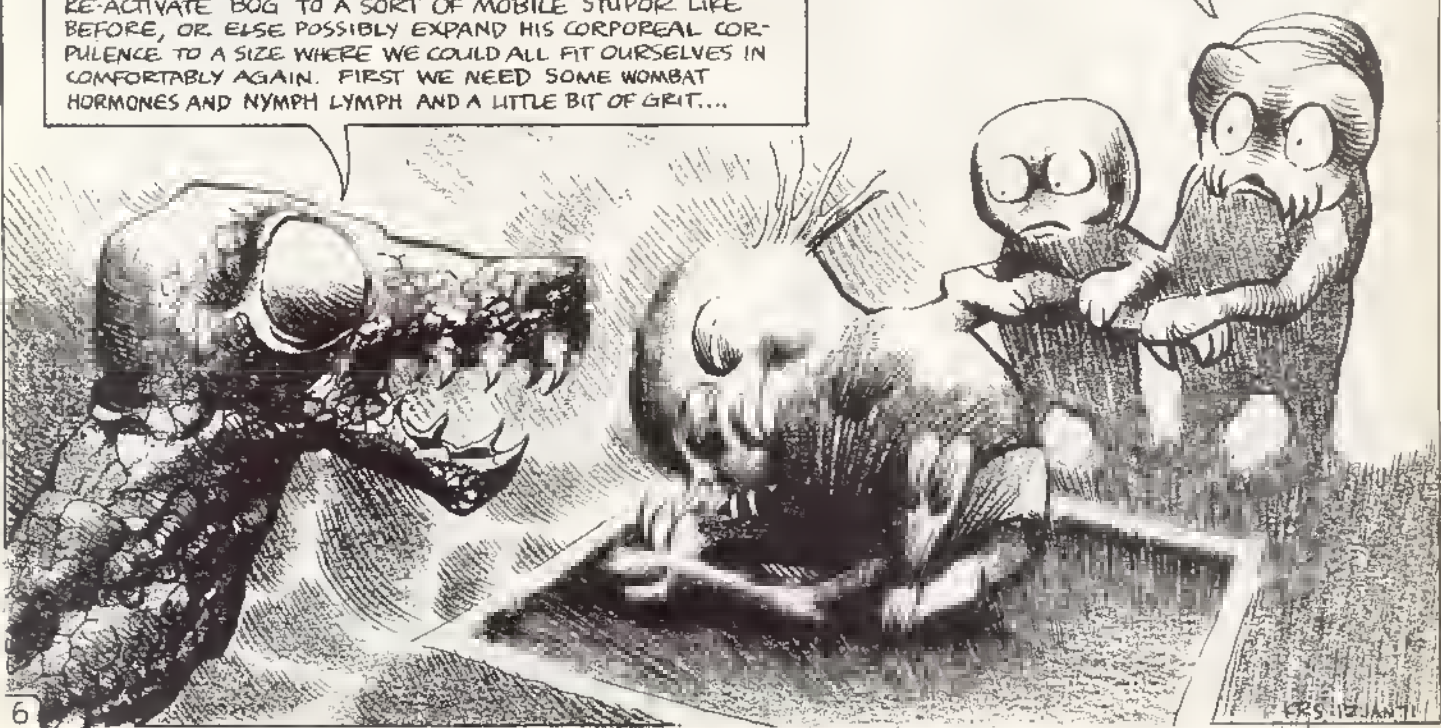
ALL OVER THE LAB ONE CAN SMELL TREMENDOUS SHORTS, STINKY SHORTS! ONE THINKS IMMEDIATELY — ONE'S NOSE BEING ONE'S GUIDE — OF BOG! THAT BOG! ONE NEVER KNEW HIM TO ACQUIRE A DECENT HABIT — OF ALL HIS COUNTRYMEN, HE WAS FAMED FOR WEARING HIS SHORTS LONGEST — THAT IS, ALTHOUGH HE WAS NEVER SHORT ON SHORTS, STILL HE... OH, WHEN ONE GETS ONE'S HANDS ON HIM!



...MEANWHILE, AND A VERY MEAN WHILE IT IS INDEED...

I STILL REMEMBER A FEW OF THE EXORCISM SPELLS THAT MY GREAT-GRAND LOTTIE SAID DID IN HER UNCLE CARBUNCLE — SHE SAID IT WAS THE ONLY EXORCIZING HE EVER HAD, IN FACT. MAYBE IF WE REVERSE ONE OF THEM, WE COULD RE-ACTIVATE BOG TO A SORT OF MOBILE STUPOR LIKE BEFORE, OR ELSE POSSIBLY EXPAND HIS CORPOREAL CORPULENCE TO A SIZE WHERE WE COULD ALL FIT OURSELVES IN COMFORTABLY AGAIN. FIRST WE NEED SOME WOMBAT HORMONES AND NYMPH LYMPH AND A LITTLE BIT OF GRIT...

EGO HERE CAN LOOK FOR ALL THOSE THINGS — I'VE REPRESSED THEM ALREADY.



GRADFLUEGOZNAB, YOU PEOPLE ARE SO
HELPLESS! YOU OUGHT TO ACCOUNT YOUR
SELVES LUCKY TO HAVE SOMEONE BRAVE
AND RESPONSIBLE AROUND. LORD ONLY...

LATER...

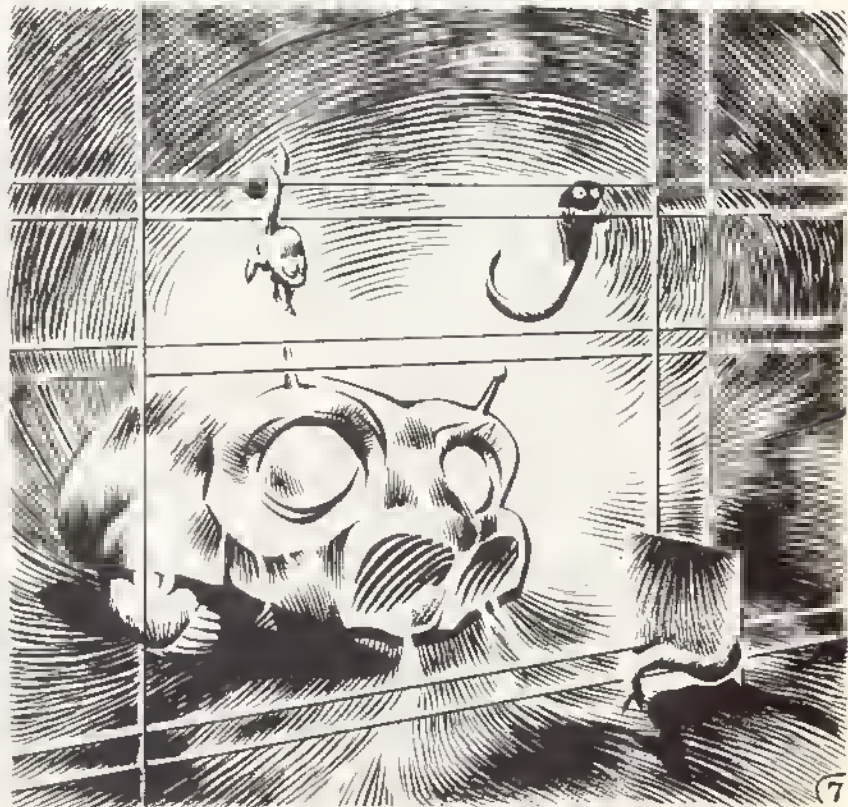
HEH. GOT 'EM
ALL, EVERYTHING
YOU WANTED. IT
TOOK A LITTLE
WHILE, OF COURSE.

MIGHTY MUSS-UP
NYMPH LYNPH YOU
GOT THERE. NO
WONDER IT TOOK
SO LONG.

AS THE SINISTER PREPARATIONS PROCEED APACE, THERE IS MEANWHILE A GREAT
HUSTLE ABOUT DR. MELNIK'S INCAPACITATED LABORATORY. MECHANICAL SERVO-UNITS
SCURRY AND FLUTTER, CLEANING UP BURNED-OUT INSULATION AS WELL AS THE
DEBRIS FROM BOG'S UNFORTUNATE TRANSMOGRIFICATION.

ANOTHER PHALANX OF UNFLANGED
PHYLACTERIES OUGHT TO HOLD THIS
TRANSFORMER FOR A WHILE, B-14.
AFTER YOU'VE GOT THEM, YOU CAN
RESUME AERIAL AESOPRICS AROUND
THE LAB. AND MAYBE FIX A BEER.

WHUP! BAAAAD NEWS AHEAD, AS A MOBILE ZEPFINITE-
KORTHRITIC NASAL UNIT UNKNOWNLY APPROACHES THE
CAUSE OF THE SHORT - BOG'S MOULDERING ANCHOVY...



IN A PAROXYSM OF PURPLE, THE
NASAL UNIT INHALES THE ANCHOVY!



FLASHING THROUGH THE AREA, THE UNIT
EXECUTES AN IMMELMANN, INTO...



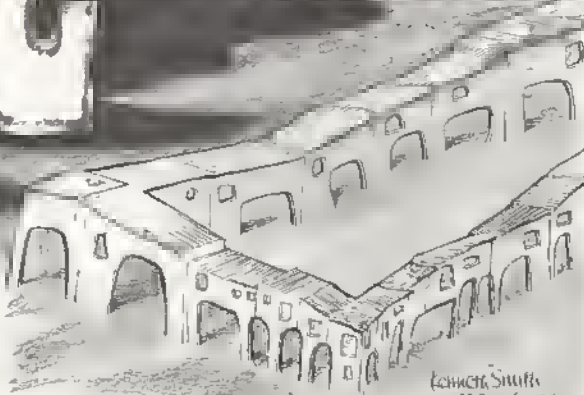
IT'S HEADING STRAIGHT
FOR THE POT OF
ANTEDILUVIAN
ANDALUSIAN
ANTHRACITE!



BOG

EPILOGUE

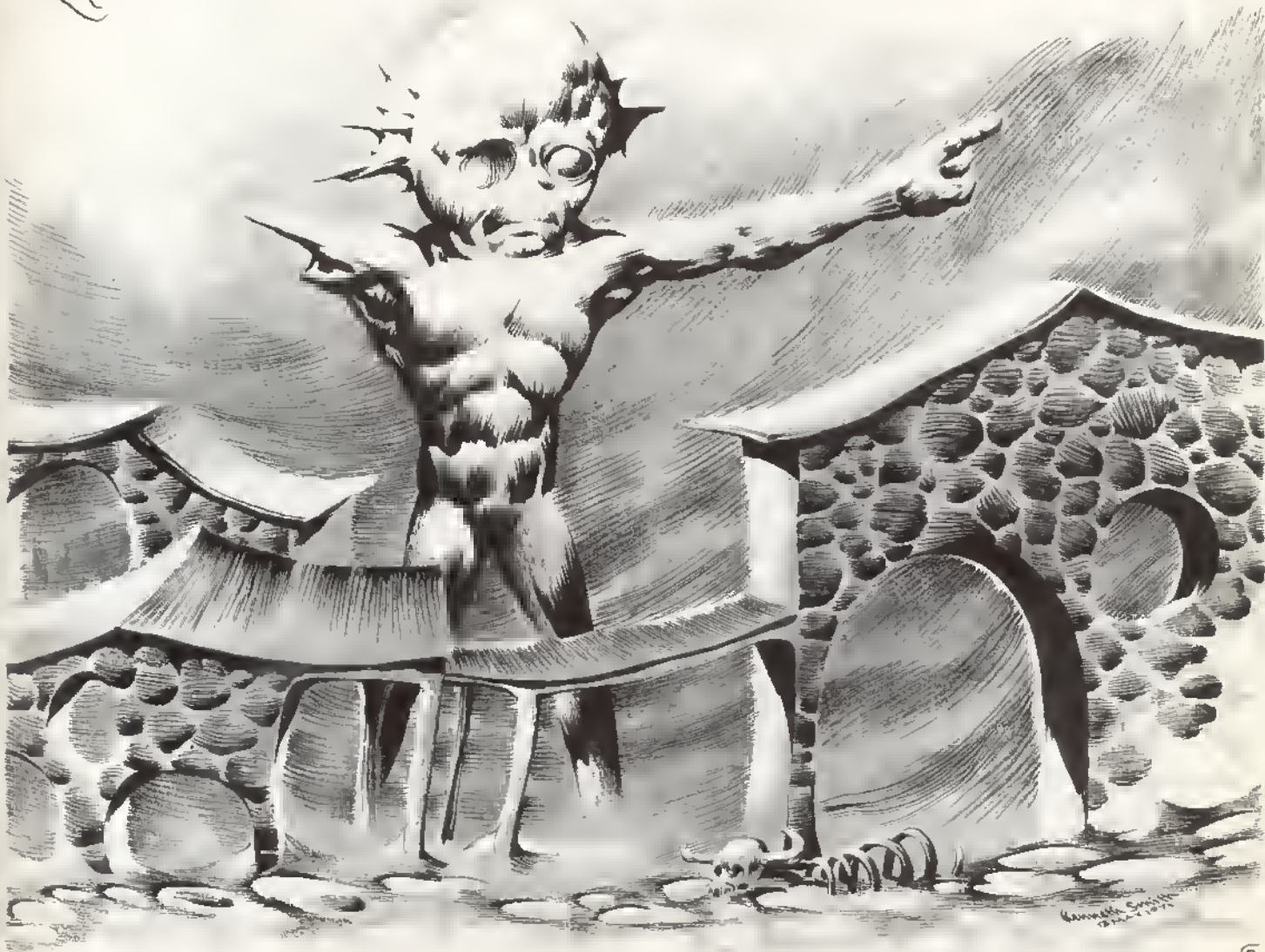
THE QUIET VILLAGE NEVER KNEW WHAT HAD HAPPENED TO THE AREA BY DR. MELNIK'S LABORATORY. IF THERE WERE SURVIVORS, THEY WERE ALL BLOWN SEVERAL COUNTIES AWAY. RUMORS TOOK THE PLACE OF MOURNING.

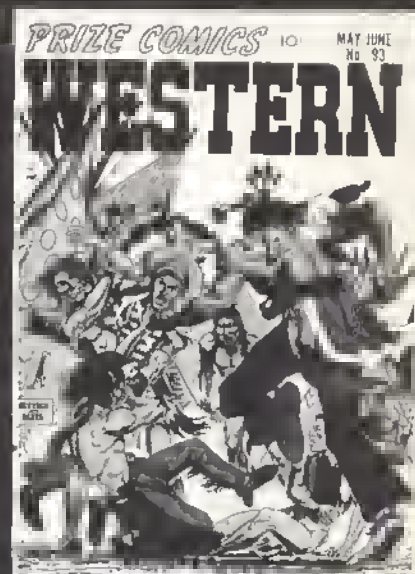
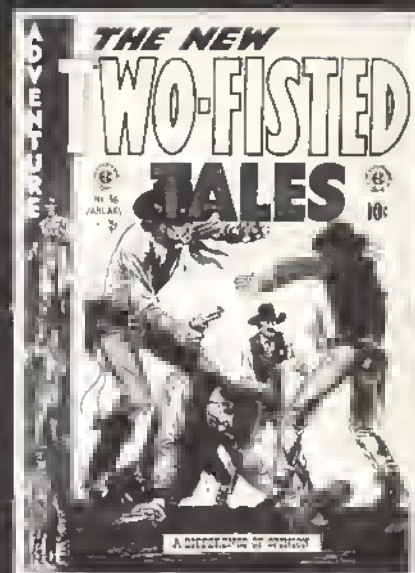
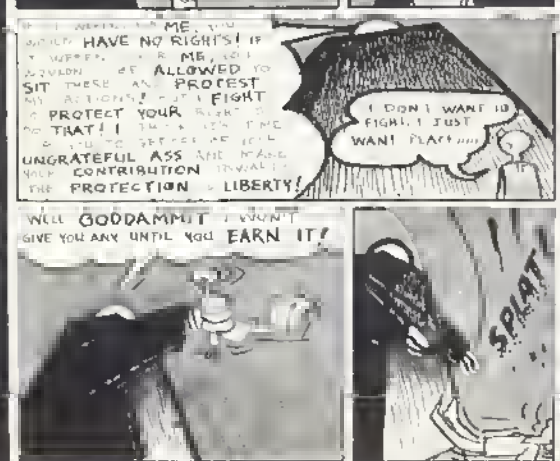
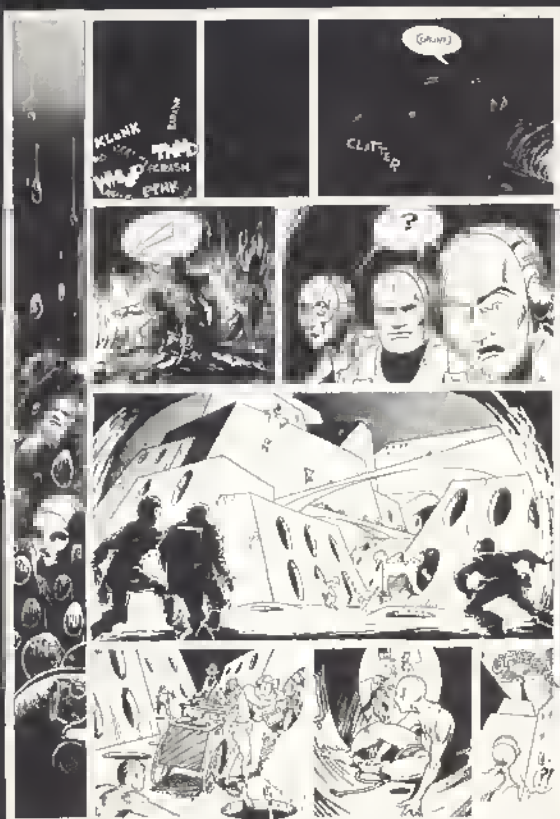


DEBATES WAXED HOT. AFTER MUCH DEBATE, THE OFFICIAL CONCLUSION OF THE ARGUMENT AND EXPLANATION OF THE ACCIDENT WAS ANNOUNCED: BOG HAD HEROICALLY SAVED THE VILLAGE FROM THE EVIL DOC. MELNIK.



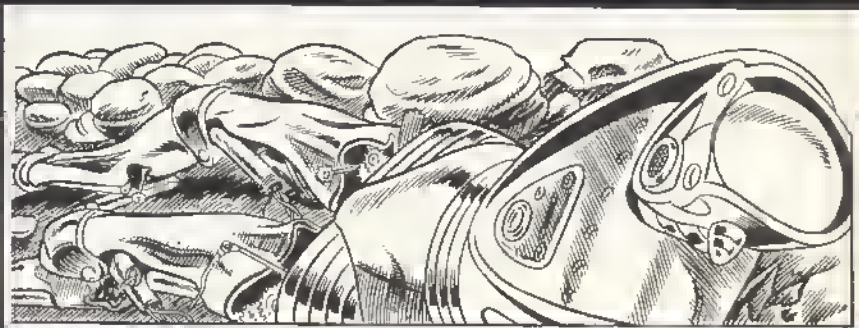
FOR THE VILLAGERS HAD NEVER MUCH TRUSTED (OR UNDERSTOOD) OLD MELNIK. A PROCLAMATION WAS QUICKLY ISSUED: SIMULTANEOUSLY WITH THE ERECTION OF A COLOSSAL STATUE IN TRIBUTE TO THE HAPLESS BOG, THE EXILE OR EXECUTION OF ALL PROFESSORS WAS DEMANDED, ALONG WITH ANY CITIZENS ARTICULATE ENOUGH TO HAVE PARTICIPATED IN THE DEBATE LEADING UP TO THIS PROCLAMATION. LATER, ANYONE OF SUFFICIENT ACUMEN TO UNDERSTAND THE PROCLAMATION WAS BANISHED; FINALLY, ANYONE WITH ENOUGH KNOW-HOW TO REPAIR ANYTHING WAS ALSO EJECTED. WHEN ALL THE POTENTIAL ENEMIES OF THE VILLAGE WERE GONE, THE VILLAGE IMMEDIATELY DETERIORATED AND COLLAPSED, AS DID THE STATUE TOO. WHICH WAS ALL RIGHT, FOR AN EVEN LARGER MONUMENT TO STUPIDITY WAS GROWING.





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SURVIVORS OF THE SUICIDE WORLD

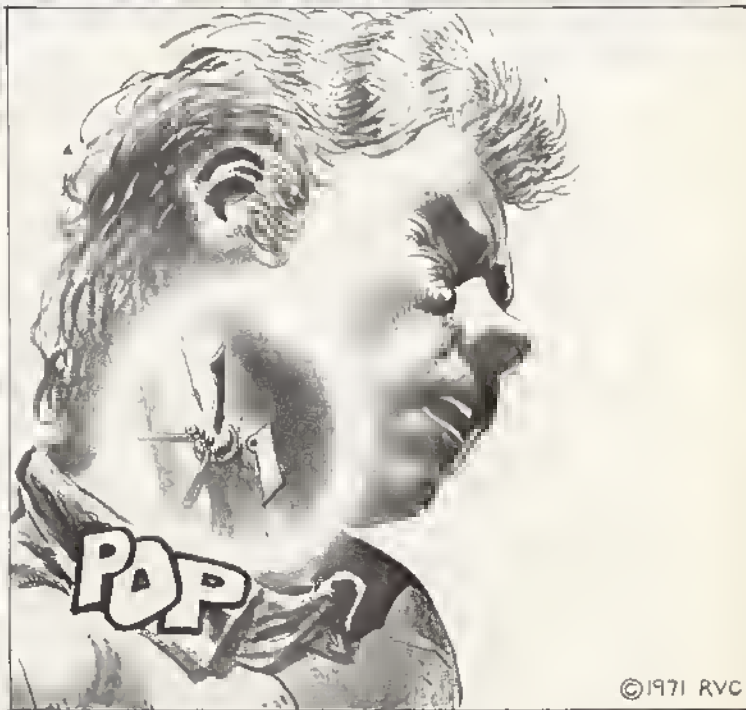
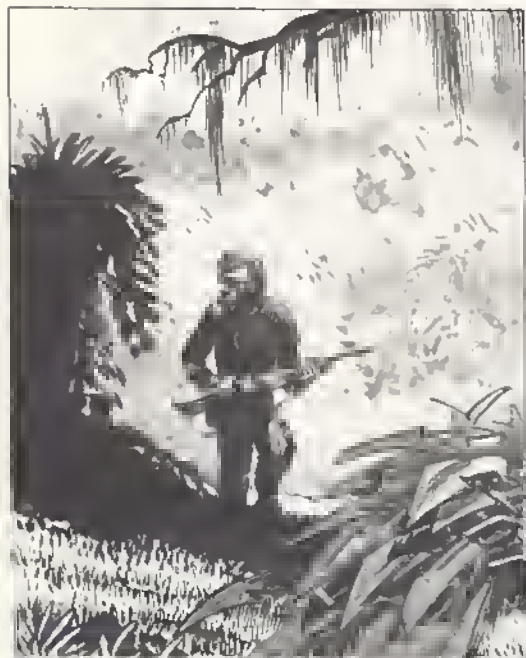
EPISODE THREE

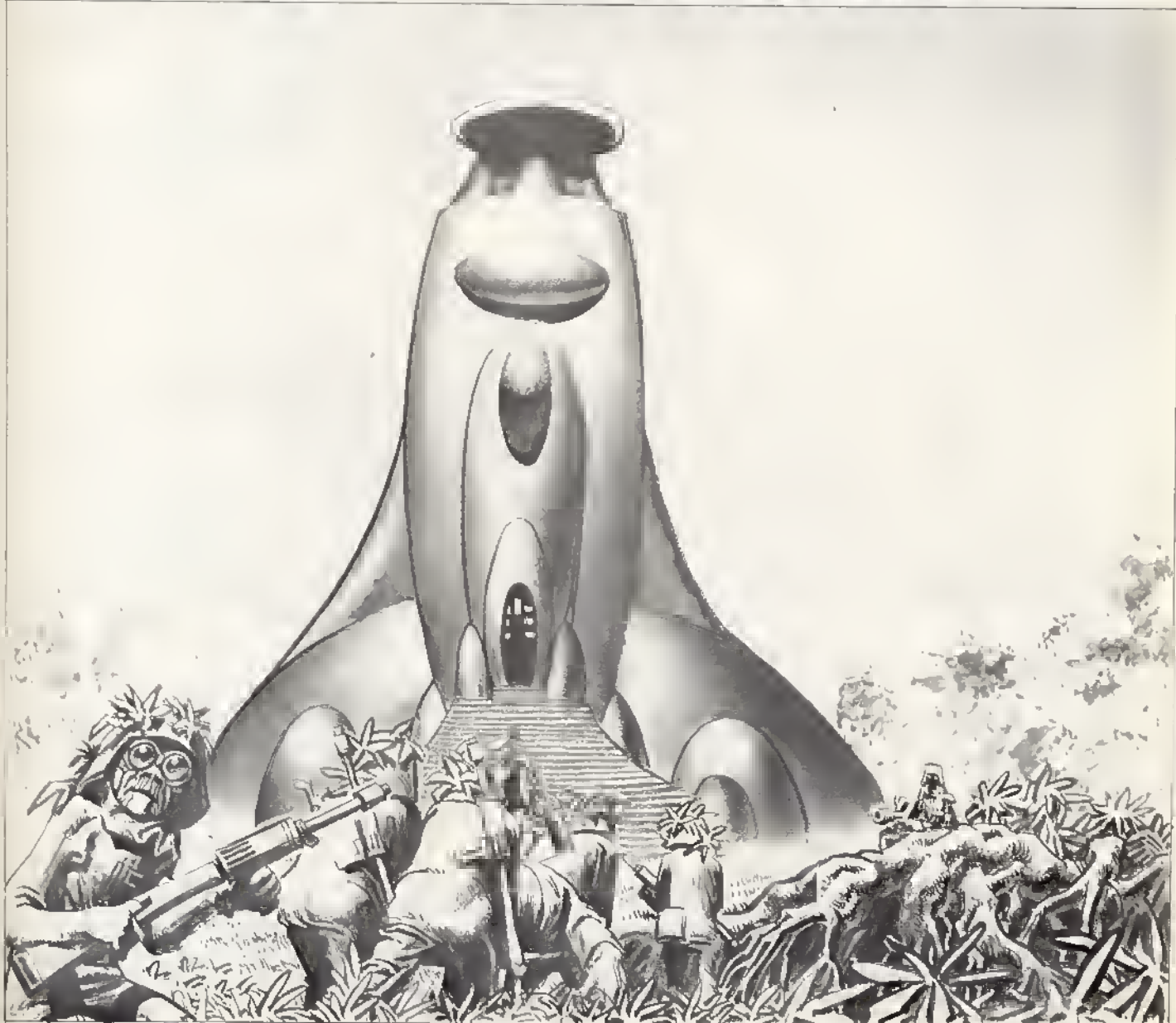
A BRIEF ENCOUNTER AT WAR

WRITTEN BY J. S. STRNAD

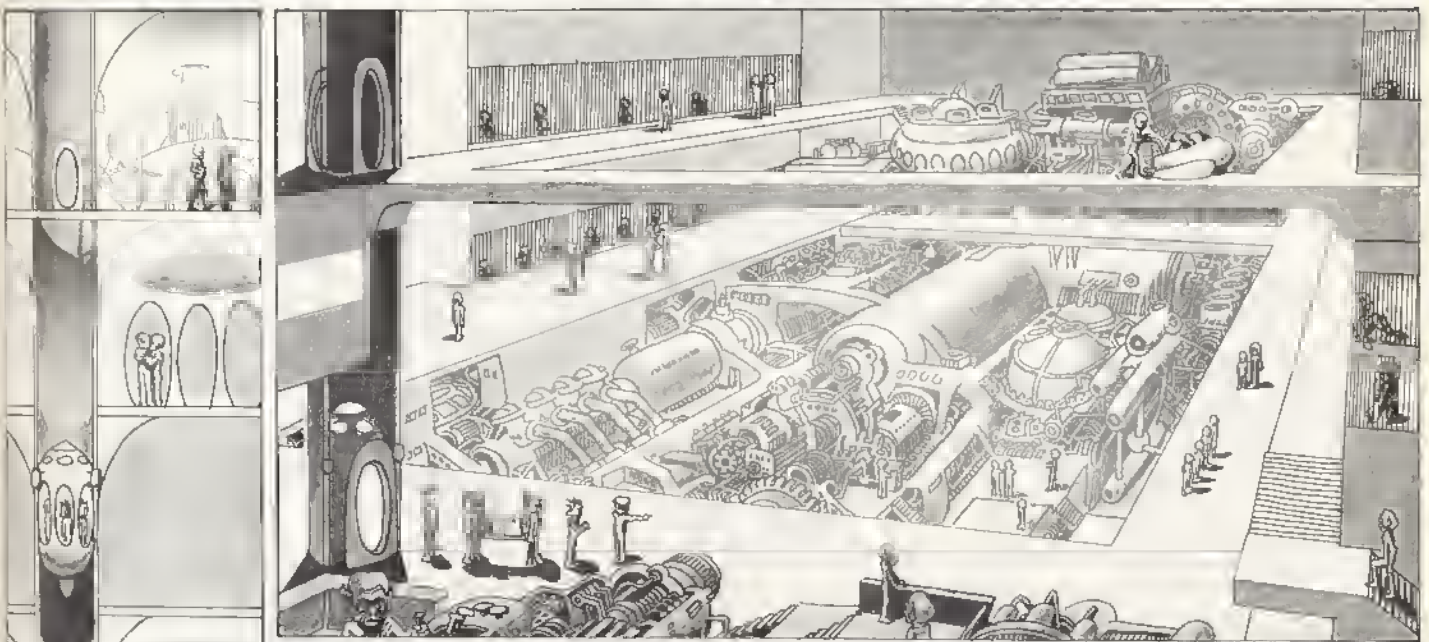
ILLUSTRATED BY RICHARD V. CORBEN

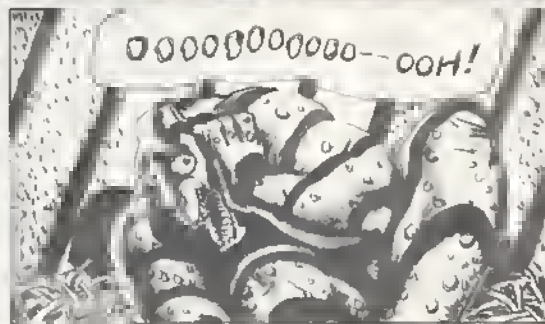
WHEREVER THERE ARE LIVING CREATURES, THERE WILL BE WAR. WHETHER THEIR CONFLICT IS FOR SURVIVAL, OR OVER A MATE, OR BECAUSE OF SUBTLE DIFFERENCES IN ESOTERIC PRINCIPLES, THE FINAL ANSWER WILL ALWAYS BE DECIDED THROUGH WAR. EVEN NOW, AFTER THE WAR THAT THREATENED THE EXISTENCE OF **ALL** LIVING CREATURES OF EARTH, THE FEW SURVIVORS FIND THEMSELVES FACED WITH YET ANOTHER CHALLENGE... THREAT FROM SPACE.









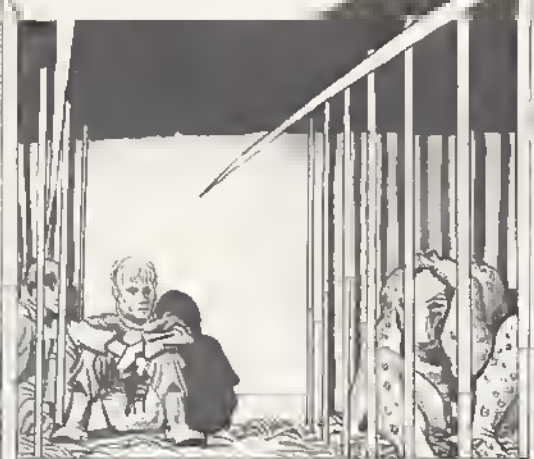


I SEE I'M NOT THE ONLY ONE THEY'VE CAPTURED.

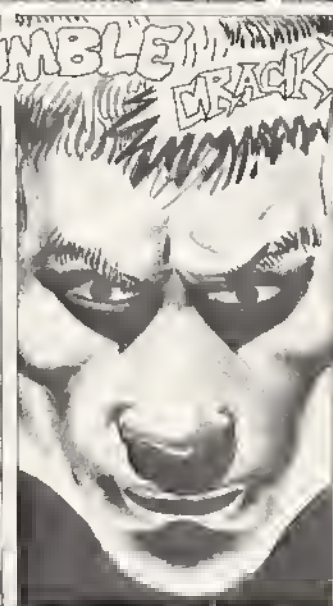
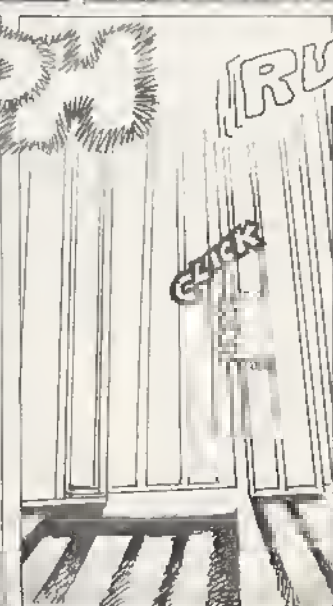
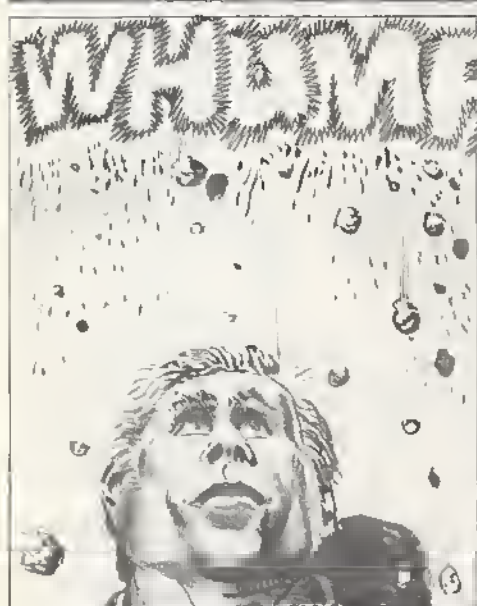
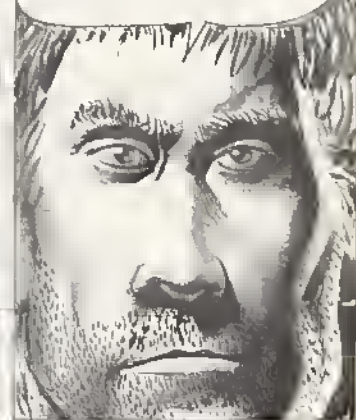
NO, THERE ARE ONE OR TWO MORE OF US. ACTUALLY, I WAS GETTING ON RATHER WELL WITH THEM, LEARNING EACH OTHER'S LANGUAGE AND ALL, UNTIL SOME IDIOT SHOT THEIR AMBASSADOR AND... WELL, HERE WE ARE. AT WAR.

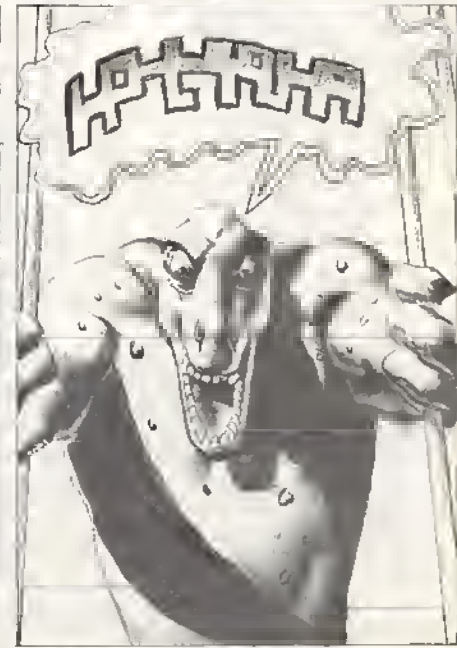
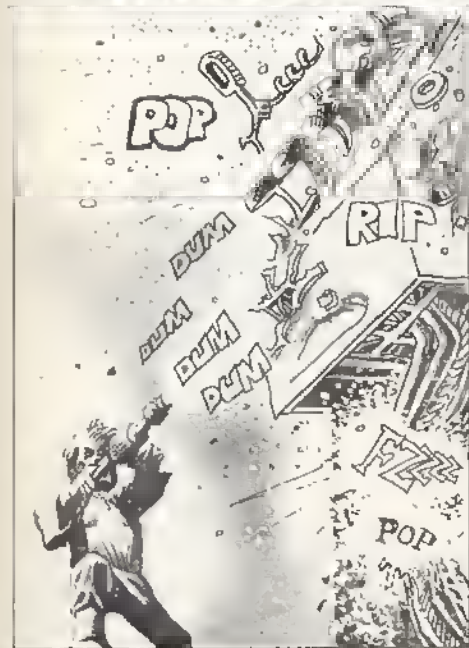
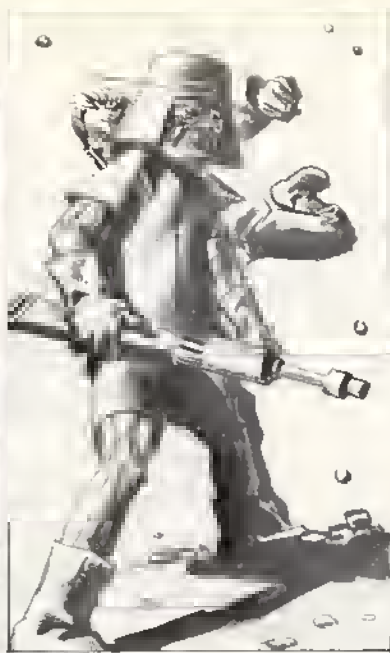
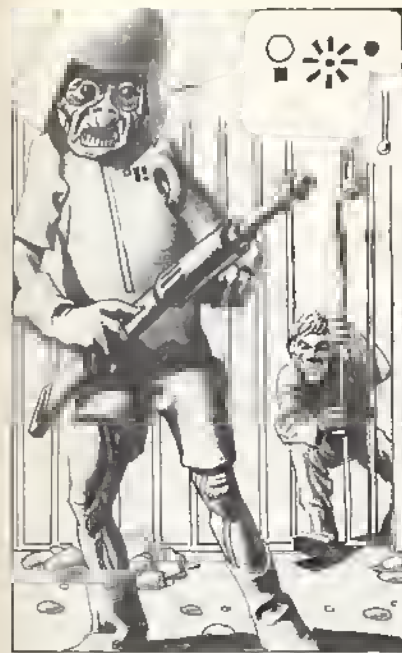


AND WHAT OF HIM, AND THE OTHERS? SAME THING, MORE OR LESS. THE ONLY REASON THE ALIENS HAVEN'T ATTACKED EARTH OUTRIGHT IS THAT THEY'RE BUSY WITH ANOTHER PLANET. IN FACT...

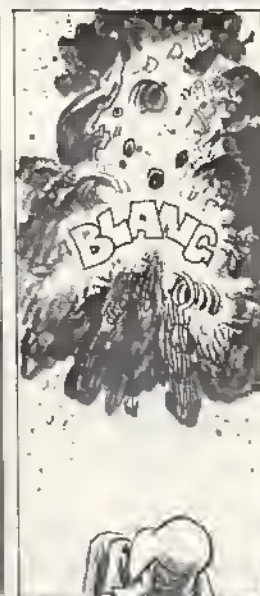
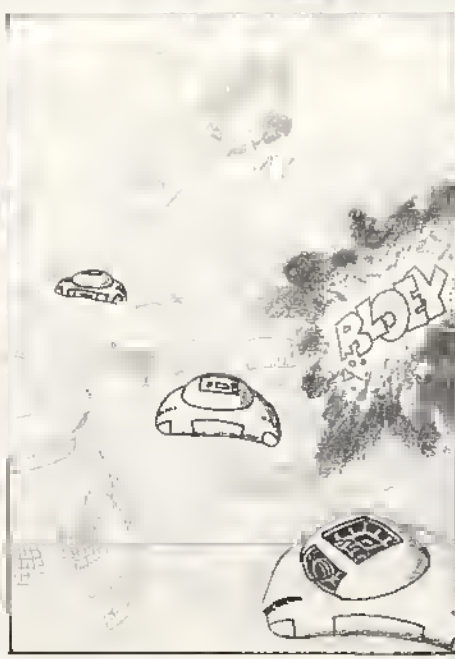


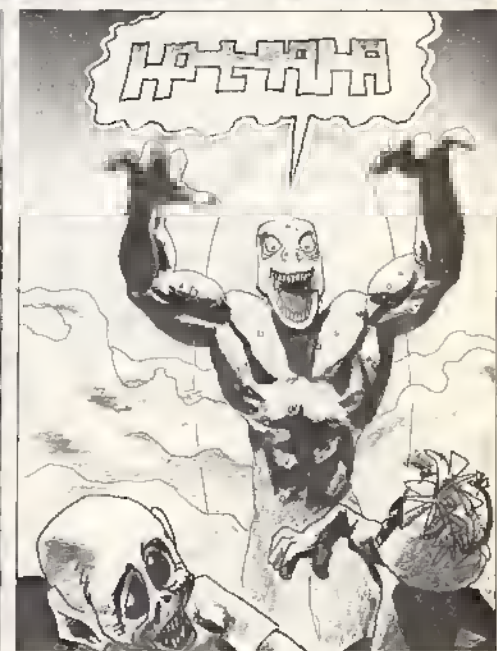
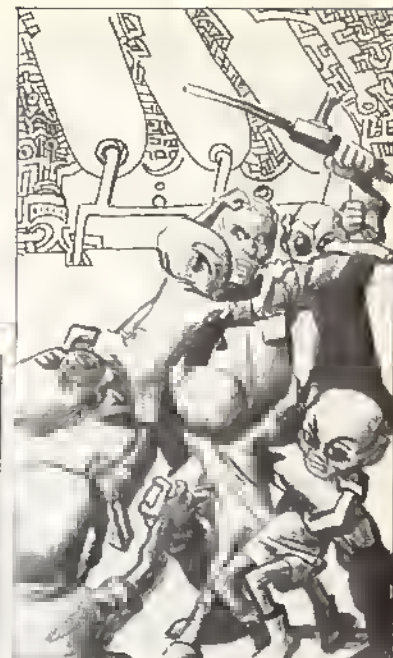
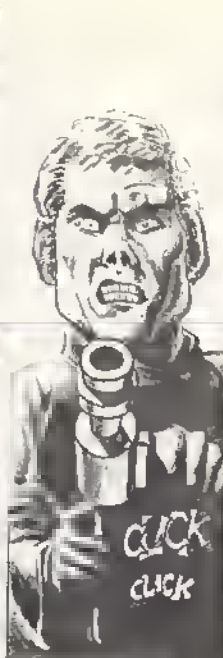
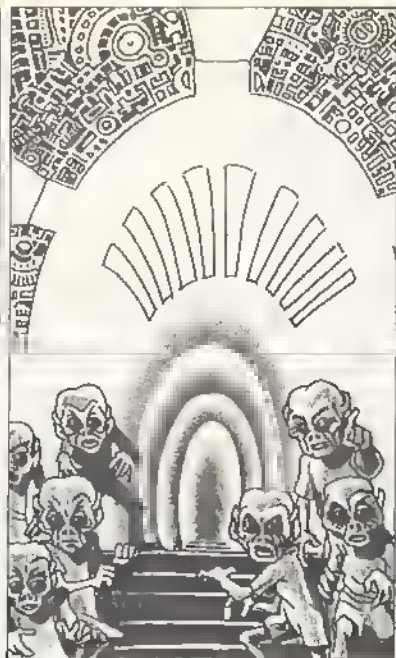
I HEAR THAT A WHOLE FLEET OF SPACESHIPS IS HEADING TOWARD THIS PLANET RIGHT NOW. GOING TO BE A BIT OF A TUSSELE UPSTAIRS, I'LL BET.

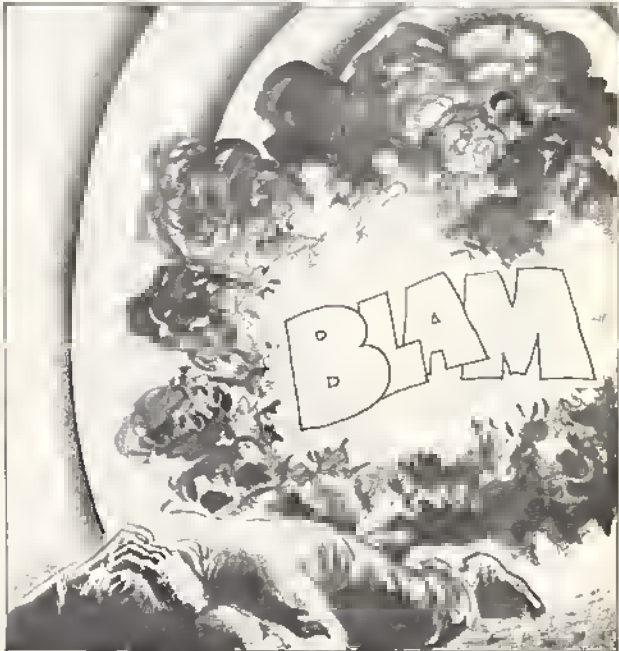


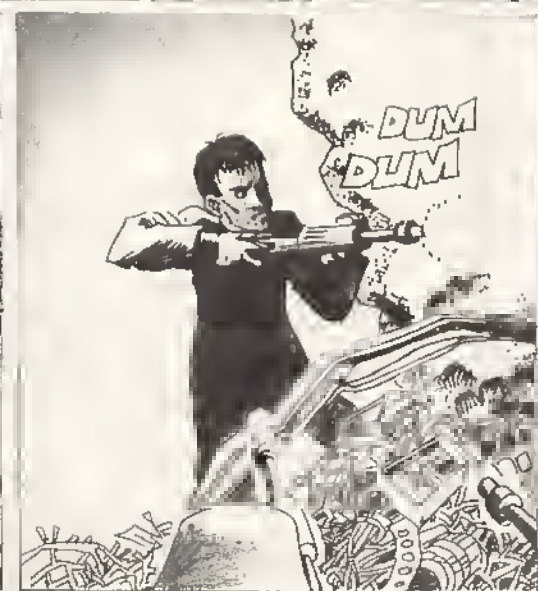
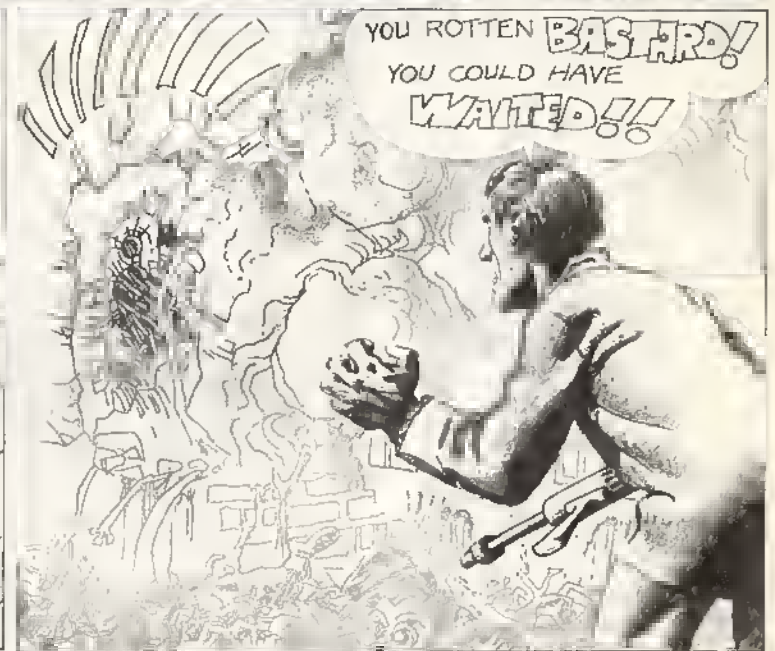












THE END



The Underground and Other Ponderings

Regardless of the opinion readers may have of the underground publishing scene, it must be admitted that the underground publishers are having, and will continue to have, an increasing effect on the comic medium and the traditions surrounding it. The lack of editorial control in the undergrounds is an important step in releasing artists (who are usually their own authors in the underground) to do what they wish, totally. The fact that the underground publishers have been able to find distributors for such "objectionable" material is the second step; in fact, it is probably the most important one. Publishers are not all that difficult to come by, whereas a good distributor is to be valued equally with the Holy Grail. Bad distributing has spelled the end of many worthwhile publications (of late, WEB OF HORROR), while a change in distributor managed to save the life of the betroubled E.C. comic MAD, now an American institution. Persnickety distributors have been smothering the four-color comics for years, and generous distributors are enabling the underground to thrive. The entire publisher/distributor/retailer set-up may further be compared to the limited distribution magazines like ANOMALY in which the publisher *is* the distributor and *is* the retailer — and that's the biggest drag of all.

The profit margin on ANOMALY is very small. Were ANOMALY a normal magazine, intended to go to a distributor who would fan it out in large quantities all over the continent, I would have to plan on selling it for 80¢ a copy. The distributor would most likely sell it for \$1.20 a copy to the retailers, who would then feel it worth their while to sell



Kenneth Smith
30 NOV 1969

it for \$2. (Their only problem would be the horrendous task of selling a \$2 magazine — is one issue of ANOMALY worth two issues of PLAYBOY?) What profit I would make would be determined by how much under 80¢ a copy it cost me to produce the magazine and by the size of the cut I would be willing to farm out to the various contributors. This issue of ANOMALY cost far too much to produce to even consider going through normal distribution channels with it. The only hope is to sell it myself, directly to the readers, and in limited quantities to the retailers. This is bad as it removes two possibilities: 1) ANOMALY will not reach a large audience, and 2) the artists will receive little, if anything, for their time and effort.

However, suppose ANOMALY were to go underground. Suppose I were to use newsprint instead of glossy paper stock. Suppose I were to print *ten* thousand copies instead of *one* thousand. Suppose I were to sell at discount to a good distributor. Ah, that is another story. The magazine might actually make money.

I'm not saying that ANOMALY is going to become an underground comic. But I'm not ruling the possibility out, either. What I'm saying is this: ANOMALY cannot continue to function in its present format, with its present circulation and form of distribution. What form it *will* take, if it takes any form at all, is anybody's guess.

The underground definitely has its drawbacks. So far, it has primarily been the playground for the artists' frustrations and sexual fantasies, catering to tastes equal to those of regular, establishment porny buyers. Little has really been done to develop the medium, to actually *tell stories worth telling*. George Metzger's MOONDOG is an exception, as are occasional shorter endeavors by others. The humor field is well represented, notably by Gilbert Shelton, but serious and pseudo-serious stories are conspicuously absent. The underground comix are assuming the same stigma as that attached to the establishment comics — they are simply a place to go for laughs, not to be taken seriously. Any publication *not* following the mainstream format is sure to be treated coolly, but might be able to sell 10,000 copies or so (not a phenomenal circulation in the underground, but an adequate one).

Of course, the magazine could be spiked with "objectionable" material to increase sales, or sexy portions could be written into each story, but this seems to be reverting to a kind of "negative censorship" that is just as restricting and obnoxious as the old sort.

It is all very perplexing, and problems far beyond these I've mentioned abound where ANOMALY is concerned. For instance, there is the fact that I am simply not a very good "new wave" editor. I demand personal involvement in my magazine; I am not content to pay out a couple thousand bucks just to print what some idiot artist wants to see printed — I have to want to see it printed *too*. This makes me a relatively obstinate person to work for. Secondly, I'm too particular in other details. I had three color transparencies of the Kline painting photographed before getting one that met my approval. I had a second set of negatives shot for the Corben strip even though I had one set in my possession that would do. (I wanted to make a two-word dialogue modification and wanted a finer halftone screen.) Needless to say, this contrariness is expensive. And third, my real interest is writing, not publishing. Maybe this third reason should have come first, as it's probably the most important.

And so it goes. Please do not order ANOMALY 4. I'm not saying there will never *be* an ANOMALY 4, but I'm certainly in no position to say how much it would cost if it *did* appear. Also, both back issues are blissfully sold out. My thanks go to the contributors this issue, and especially Richard Corben who was absolutely no trouble to me at all. Now I'd like to bow out with the following passage from Lewis Carroll's ALICE IN WONDERLAND:

"Would you tell me, please, which way I ought to go from here?"

"That depends a good deal on where you want to get to," said the Cat.

"I don't much care where —" said Alice.

"Then it doesn't matter which way you go," said the Cat.

"— so long as I get *somewhere*," Alice added as an explanation.

"Oh, you're sure to do that," said the Cat, "if you only walk long enough."





Kenneth Smith
30 NOVEMBER 1969

